

## **Webinar 1: Strengthening Connections Across the PFCE Framework's Program Foundations**

Announcer: Everyone, and welcome to the Strengthening Connections Across the PFCE Framework's Program Foundations webinar. Today's webinar is being recorded. At this time, I would like to turn the webinar over to Christine Patton. Please go ahead, ma'am.

Christine Patton: Thank you so much. Hello, everyone. It's just after 2:00, so we're going to get started. My name is Christine Patton, and I am with Harvard Family Research Project, one of the partners in the National Center on Parent, Family and Community Engagement, and I will be moderating today's session.

Before we get started I just have a few technical and logistical notes to pass on. For those of you experiencing any technical difficulties, please use the private tab in the chat box in the lower left corner and double-click on Leaders and Assistants to connect with our team to help resolve your issue. We encourage you to use the chat box to submit questions for the Q&A portion of today's webinar, and finally, as a last note, today's webinar will be archived, and when it becomes available, you will receive an e-mail with the archive and a list of additional resources.

So today's session is scheduled to last an hour and fifteen minutes, and as you can see, we have a great group of presenters today. They will be presenting for about an hour, and their presentations will be followed by a 15-minute Q&A. and as I just stated, please submit your questions to our presenters using the chat box and we'll try to answer as many of those as we can during the Q&A. To kick us off today, we have Kiersten Beigel. Kiersten is a Family and Community Partnerships Specialist at the Office of Head Start. Kiersten has been working at OHS for five years, and at the Administration for Children and Families at Health and Human Services for ten years. Prior to her federal work, she worked with parents and children in schools, hospitals, child welfare, mental health settings, and shelter programs. And Kiersten, I'll toss it over to you.

Kiersten Beigel: Well, good afternoon, everyone, and thank you, Christine. I wanted to welcome everybody, welcome Head Start and Head Start friends and we're really excited about the amount of interest that we have received in this webinar series. I'm just going to take a few minutes to tell you a little bit about the series, and then we'll move right on to the good stuff and hear from our presenters. So really what we wanted to do, is we do a lot of training, and hopefully some of you have met folks in our Center and maybe heard some of this content before, and you're looking to go a little deeper, think about it differently, or maybe some of you haven't really had the chance to kind of dig in on the framework at all, and so I think in both cases this should be useful to you.

But we do get a lot of questions sort of about the framework of how to understand the connections and the framework, what do the different elements in the framework kind of mean. And so we're really hoping to help you understand how to build on what we refer to as the program foundations and impact areas that promote family and child outcomes. Another kind of easy way of saying that is, thinking about systems and services, and how those promote family and child outcomes in your program.

We want to use the series to show how programs can strengthen parent, family and community engagement through the Foundation, which we refer to as leadership continuous program improvement and professional development, and then of course, undergirding all of that is the importance of positive and goal-oriented relationships.

So some things that you'll be learning, kind of building on what I just said, are thinking about how these different elements in the framework can be used to strengthen your program. And as I mentioned, the foundational practices in the foundation areas of program leadership, continuous improvement, and professional development, which you see in the yellow column here, are largely going to be the focus of this webinar series. These are really -- a lot of times historically in Head Start or Early Head Start, we kind of think of family engagement in terms of the service area of family partnerships and the kinds of things we do in home visiting with families, and this framework really expands and broadens out this idea of family engagement as needing to be integrated and systemic. So those front-end foundations are really important, and we to kind of delve into those with you in this webinar series.

So you'll have opportunities to learn about strategies to identify, collect, and use data for decision-making in PFCE -- and hopefully you know PFCE acronym by now, Parent Family and Community Engagement. We'll also look at different strategies to address barriers and PFCE. And then just a couple of things. I know you all are webinar savvy in using different kinds of options out there for your training, your staff and your programs. You've already heard, this actually, these webinars will be archived, so we encourage you to use them and train with them, train your staff with them, use parts of them in ways that make the most sense for what you're trying to build and how you're trying to move forward. We obviously encourage you to participate in each of the webinars. They'll build on each other and they'll connect with each other, as these elements and the framework do. And we encourage you to send us your questions during each webinar. You can also send us questions after. And just stay tuned for e-mails from us, from the folks, the National Center who are working this webinar over time. So, I think eventually, if we seem to get good feedback from you and we feel like this is really helpful, we'll probably kind of move through different parts of the framework, but kick us off with this series, we're really focusing on the Foundation. So with that, I will turn it on over.

Christine: Thanks so much, Kiersten. Before our next presenter, Elena Lopez, tells us about how we can use the PFCE framework as a roadmap to reach family and child outcomes, we want to do a quick check-in and see how many of you have read the PFCE framework. So, if you can just take about ten seconds, we've launched the poll and we'll give you a chance to weigh in.

All right. I'm going to close the poll and share the results with you all. So it looks like -- I'm not sure if everyone has seen this yet, there it is -- so it looks like about 75% of you have read the framework. That's great. We're going to talk some more about how you can use the ideas in the framework to strengthen PFCE through our next three presenters, so I'm going to turn it over to Elena to kick that off.

Elena Lopez: Hello, everyone, and I would say good morning. I'm calling from the other coast, the West coast, and it's gratifying to know that the majority of you have read the PFCE framework. And as we were developing this webinar series, I happened to be reading a powerful and challenging book entitled, "Giving our Children a Fighting Chance." It's written by Susan Newman and Donna Solano, and they studied two neighborhoods in Philadelphia, one affluent and one poor. And this was a ten-year study with about 21 different substudies, and what they found out was that in the poor neighborhoods, children develop their literacy skills outside the home or program through libraries, and young children who entered the preschool section of the library tended to be unaccompanied. This is very different in affluent neighborhoods where preschool children entered the library with an adult family member or a caregiver. And during that time that children in the affluent neighborhoods were with adults in the library, there was on average 47 minutes out of an hour spent on reading activities. And this cumulative disadvantage is shown when children are in middle school, and that the level of library reading material of youth differed in the affluent and the poor neighborhoods. Kids who were reading or borrowing books from the affluent neighborhood, the books that they chose were 93% at grade level. Comparatively, in poor neighborhoods, the kids were selecting books that were at 58% -- the kids were choosing books at grade level, but 42% were reading or selecting books below grade level. So --

Christine: [Inaudible] Elena, sorry to interrupt. Can you speak up a little bit? We're having some trouble hearing you.

Elena: Oh, okay, is this better?

Christine: A little louder, please.

Elena: Yeah. Is this better now?

Christine: Yeah, thank you.

Elena: So reading the Newman and Solano book reminded me of another set of research studies conducted in the 1990s by Betty Hart and Todd Risley, and they studied 42 families in Kansas, and what they found out was that what children learn in the first three years of life are critically important for language development. And they also point to the disparities of the number of words heard by infants and toddlers. And they estimated that in one year, children from professional families heard about 11 million words. Children from working class families, 6 million words, and children from poor and welfare families, 3 million words. So that's a great disparity with children from the professional families hearing more than three times the number of words that children from welfare families hear. So if we move fast forward to today, an important study was conducted about high school graduation,

and Donald Hernandez and his colleagues found that one in six children who are not reading proficiently in third grade failed to graduate high school on time. Across these three studies, the researchers make an argument, or recommend strong parent, family and community engagement. So we need to think about what is meaningful and effective family engagement? We need to step back and reassess our approach and consider what are some new approaches that would be more meaningful and more effective. Not just in Head Start programs but in other early childhood programs and was also found in K to 12 -- there needs to be a change in our approach or our mindset towards parent, family and community engagement, moving from considering family engagement as an add-on to an essential part or essential to the whole program's mission, moving from inputs, meaning activities, to thinking about what are the results of those activities, or what are the outcomes?

Moving from family engagement as a responsibility of some staff, to thinking about family engagement as everyone's responsibility, from a program director to the teacher, family service workers and the custodial staff. Moving also from family engagement as a stand alone, or siloed program, set aside, to one where family and community engagement is connected and woven through the Head Start program. So it was this type of approach that led us to consider the parent, family and community engagement framework that Kiersten introduced to you. So basically what our framework says is that in order to achieve your child outcomes, which are that children are ready for school and that they sustain their developmental and learning games through the elementary grade, is that you need strong family engagement outcomes.

A program needs to engage families and children's learning and development, and also to support family well-being, and to encourage parents and families to become leaders, leaders in their community that would advocate for high quality services for young children. Now, the progress towards family engagement outcomes depends on what we call the program impact area, or services, that is to have a program that welcomes families, that respects their different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and that gives them the opportunities to connect with their peers, having family partnerships that are positive and goal-oriented, engaging parents and families in their children's learning and school readiness, and also community partnerships which are so important to make sure that children and families receive comprehensive services. It is also through these community partnerships that parents are able to connect with others in the community and to develop their leadership skills. Go to the column on the most left-hand side, that is what we call our program foundations.

And the program foundation impacts the service areas or program impact areas, and as Kiersten mentioned, the three components of the program foundation areas are: leadership, continuous program improvement, and professional development, which our presenters today will talk to you about. I think most importantly when we look at this framework, we have to think about the connections. What are the connections within the program foundations and across the program foundation and impact areas that will help a program make progress toward family outcomes, and in the process give children, poor children, a fighting chance to be successful in this society.

This last slide is about the references that I mentioned earlier in terms of the research, and I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Ned Shaw, who was a former Head Start bus driver, for the illustration that accompanied my presentation of the research. Now I'll turn it back to Christine.

Christine: Yes, thank you, Elena. So next up we have Judie Jerald. Judie is the Early Childhood Advisor for a U.S. program, that's Save the Children. Before joining Save, she served as the National Director of the Early Head Start program from 1999 to 2006. Judie, I'll pass it over to you.

Judie Jerald: Thank you, Christine. I'm very happy to be here with all of you out there, more than 600 of you, I understand. I have to remember to move my slides, ok. Head Start, of course, is a comprehensive program -- you all know that. The concept of family and community is certainly not new in Early Head Start and Head Start, nor is positive transition for children and families into schools. However, the parent, family and community engagement framework is a new idea, which helps programs to approach parent, family, community engagement as a holistic, systemic, integrated and interrelated process. As Elena said, it's not about some staff --it's about everyone being involved. It's not a stand alone. It must be connected.

The PFCE framework can help to guide programs to be more focused and intentional in their work with families and communities. Think of a web, with program leadership and staff at its center, addressing the needs of children, the needs and goals of parents with an integral connection to school and to community. Today I want to illustrate using the PFCE framework and with some examples from my own experience, how the program foundations of leadership, continuous program improvement and professional development all work together to support community partnerships that help make family engagement meaningful and sustainable as well after families leave Head Start. Of course, strong program foundations also support school readiness through the framework family engagement outcomes, and leadership is where this all starts, leadership. Parents, family and community engagement is a whole program responsibility, not just for directors but the program leadership, including the director and agency boards, must create and support an environment that supports all staff involvement with the community.

Let me give you an example. In the early Head Start Head Start program I directed in Brattleboro, Vermont, we created advisory groups and task forces for just about everything. Some of them were for curriculum development, male involvement, and a loan fund. In every case, staff were asked if they wanted to be part of a work group. All staff were invited, and which one they would like to be part of, and interested parents and community members were invited as well.

So for example, our bus driver was part of the curriculum development group; but one wouldn't ordinarily think of a bus driver being interested in curriculum, but he was and he was interested because he wanted to be able to use the bus time as a time for learning for children. As a result, his involvement with the group, they developed a bus ride curriculum that included music, singing, rhyming and even mapping: Which way are we going to turn now?

We also had a men's group that included fathers and grandfathers, a community mental health worker and a policeman, as well as program staff. This group developed a protocol for engaging and working with men. They presented their recommendations to the agency board, which happened to be the school board, and the policy council, and it was adopted as our best practice tool for working with men and in the families of our program. We also encouraged all staff to join community groups and boards throughout the county. In order to support their involvement in the community, they were given comp time for the evening and weekend meetings they often participated in. This gave us a much broader community base than just having the director or management staff involved in community meetings, as well as an opportunity for staff to bring parents to community meetings with them and encouraged the groups to invite Head Start parents to serve on community groups. It was an opportunity for building family connections to the community.

When staff are involved in the community, the community knows more about what Head Start is doing, and the staff learn how the program and its quality are perceived by the community. This is a win-win and is actually an ongoing assessment. How are we doing? What do they think of us? How can we better meet the family engagement outcomes and the framework for family well-being for transitions and help families connect to the community and become advocates and leaders?

One of our community parent-staff groups came about because a bank put aside some funds for a loan for our Head Start family as part of their community investment mandate. This loan fund committee, which was made up of staff, policy council and community members set up an application process, which enabled families to take out small loans for home repairs, used cars, and school or employment costs. Believe me, going into a bank and meeting with a loan officer was a powerful learning experience for our families and also for the bankers.

Connecting parents and community is such an important family engagement outcome. Having whole agency and staff commitment and ownership for family and community engagement where everyone has a role in cross-disciplinary teams give staff opportunities for professional development and leadership. They are learning and using different skills than they may use in their usual role, and even gain a different perspective on their work. Our data coordinator, for example, served on our health wellness committee and became much more persistent in making sure that the health information on children was current when she came to realize how useful that information was to families and staff, in making sure that children were getting the health services when they should. It wasn't just data. She learned that it supported family wellness and understood better why it was needed in a timely way. If the program provides ongoing training and technical assistance to staff, this will help them to better understand the framework and move along the continuum of building positive and goal-oriented positive relationships, which in turn supports the staff to be an integral part of the journey toward family and child outcomes, with a common goal of all, the final goal to be school-ready.

PFCE and the framework truly support the development of a learning organization, where roles are symbiotic within and between the program and the community. That's what we learned in Brattleboro and that's what we have seen in many other places -- I have seen in many other places as well.

Now, let's talk for a minute about program continuous improvement. There are four questions that have guided my work in Head Start and Early Head Start and now with Save the Children. Does the program know if it is doing what it thinks it is doing? Does the community know how well the program and children are doing? Do the families know how their children are doing? And do the program and parents know what the school expectations are? The first step is for all staff -- once again, all staff to be part of the ongoing assessment of how the program is doing. Gathering this knowledge so that it can be used to foster continuous improvement can be done in so many ways: Information collected from data, from the PIR, child portfolios, local evaluations, focus groups, conversations with family and community members, formal assessments.

But what is the most important is that the information is shared and used and that it is timely and provided regularly. Let me use family engagement and transition as an example. Although we had many transition to kindergarten activities in our program, such as parent meetings in the school, a summer transition program, and sharing of information about the child with the school, we knew that the school personnel did not really know our families very well. They did not know what the parents wanted for their child; so we instituted individual child transitions to kindergarten, parent-community meetings. The parent of the child who was transitioning into kindergarten chose who from the community they wanted at the meeting. And the school personnel people were there, community agency people were there, as well as of course, the parents of the child and a Head Start representative.

They all sat down together.

What was different about this was that the parent, with the support of the Head Start staff -- often they practiced this ahead of time -- the parent led the meeting and talked with the kindergarten teacher and other school personnel about their child, what their child needed and what they wanted for their child. They talked about how the community agency representatives who were there at the meeting had been supporting them and how they were involved with their family. These are often, as I'm sure you can imagine, very moving presentations by the parents and warm and caring discussions.

What I knew after each one of these transition meetings was that the school and teacher knew the child and family better than they would have, and they would care about them and pay more attention to their needs than they might have otherwise. It also made our staff feel much better about turning over quote unquote "our child" to others, because we felt that they would care for them more as a result of knowing their lives better. Now, this is a labor intensive and time-consuming activity, which is -- I'm sure, is what you're thinking; and we never were able to do it with all families, but those who needed, particularly needed, a positive transition to school the most, really benefitted by it.

By including the community agencies, the parents felt supported and the school knew that others in the community were available and connected to that child. The transition parent meeting is an example of how positive and goal-oriented relationships can be woven throughout the program, staff, families and community, and we know -- I know you all know -- that it is all about relationships -- relationships, relationships, relationships. And all of these relationships matter and must be nurtured. Program leadership and staff, community and program, program and school, staff and parents, parents and child,

child and staff. And as I said earlier, using the framework for PFCE helps the programs implement a holistic, integrated, and cross-disciplinary approach that is both inclusive and positive, and of course, relationship-based. Back to you, Christine.

Christine: Thank you so much, Judie. I just want to let everyone know in the audience that we're seeing your questions come in, and we appreciate you asking them, and we'll do our best to address as many as we can during the Q&A session. Our next presenter is Nila Rinehart. Nila is the Project Director at the Office of Head Start National Interim Management Program at Community Development Institute. Nila has worked with many Head Start programs, including struggling programs that have transformed their organizations and are moving towards high performance. Nila, I'll turn it over to you.

Nila Rinehart: Great, thank you, everybody. I'm just so happy to be here today, and Judie did a nice lead-in for my portion of the presentation, and I'm happy to be able to just pick up on where you left off, so thanks for that. This afternoon what I will talk about is that high-performing organizations really create positive outcomes for families and children, and in order to deliver on the items that Judie mentioned in her presentation, we have to have a strong foundation to support the staff as they engage their work to support then positive outcomes for families. So we'll be talking a lot about high-performing organizations. They do require systems, tools, and structures and most importantly a human and community element in order for programs to be successful. And I'll be talking about that in relationship to the lessons that I've learned from the Head Start program that I have managed, as both a project director for a national contract and also most importantly, from my work as a Head Start director. Let's go on to the next slide.

It's really obvious that performance drives outcomes, that high-performing organizations really do create positive outcomes for children and families. And I want to spend some time just talking about, what do we mean by a high performance organization? There's lots of information in the business literature about high performance and organizations, but these areas seem to resonate the most and link to Head Start values and outcomes, and really do support the performance of programs, so I'd like to take some time to just explore each of these cornerstones that are located in the outer rings.

Let's first talk about culture and values. So what is culture? Those are all the beliefs and knowledge shared by an organization. There are things like feelings and attitudes, behaviors and characteristics of a particular social group. What is a value? It's to appreciate, it's treasuring, it's to esteem, and it's really the ideal. So what are some examples of some cultural values that might be present in a Head Start organization that have high performance going for it?

There are things like high integrity is present. There is a value on the human potential. It's strength-based. It's really about creating an organizational culture of a higher calling that has a big purpose, and



high expectations of self. What about the next item, leadership at all levels? What does that mean? That section means that no matter who you are, you are a leader in an organization, and every single person is responsible for the outcomes and performance of the whole, and it doesn't matter whether you're a janitor, a fiscal person taking care of the accounts payable, or whether or not you're a family service manager or a project program director, every person in the organization is a leader. So everyone has responsibility to lead at all levels. And a leader is really somebody who is human, who inspires others, and it may be someone who has authority, but not always. It's really about each person, doing whatever they have as a realm of responsibility contributing to the outcome of the whole.

So how do you create that in an organization? Some of the items that we have found very helpful in the management of our national programs includes things like the assignment of whole tasks, and that really enables staff to experience a sense of connection in their work and a contribution to the organization's goals. It's helpful, because when you assign a whole task, it helps everybody to understand how their individual pieces connect with the outcome of the whole.

So for example, to make it more practical, let's think about a family visitor that visits families every day. She's completing reports or he's completing reports, and it's helpful for that person to also be the person who inputs the family's data and who is responsible for the reporting of what has been accomplished for that individual family and child, so that they can really see that family and learn about that family through the various lenses of information. And it's by analyzing and seeing that whole, that they become aware. Their awareness is raised about their individual outcomes and about their process for ensuring that that child has positive outcomes, so that they can see really the relationship between that one home visit, family visit and the family's outcomes and therefore connecting that one visit to the program's performance. So the assignment of whole tasks is important, so that people see themselves from the very beginning of their input to the end.

A second area is clear expectations of staff, being very clear about what we're expecting staff to do, what they're not to do, and making sure that they receive that regular feedback. Items, things such as organizing into teams so that people are jointly accountable for whole tasks so that it's not just one person but it's a team that is responsible for the outcome, because every single issue that comes up in Head Start, more heads are better than one, right. And level of autonomy over work, but with accountability for produced results -- that's what I mean by leadership at all levels, and it's when people are given this kind of leadership, that they're actually able to perform better and realize the results that they are producing, or not producing.

The next item I want to talk about in this wheel is the area of financial efficiency. And it would seem like this area doesn't quite fit with the rest of the support systems, because it seems like a more mechanical sort of thing -- maybe ancillary or an accessory. But if you really think about financial efficiency and stability, it's really the use, being able to use financial information, financial data, and budgeting practices to take immediate decisions. If there's one area that we see most in our national interim management program that tends to hang programs up, it's in their management of financial issues.

Many of the programs that come to us as an interim manager, either because they've relinquished or have been suspended or terminating from operating, most of those programs come to us because they have somehow not managed their funds appropriately or well, and so bad decisions result from that which leaves them in a position of not being able to support families and children and having good outcomes. So the use of immediate financial data, good stewardship over federal funds, budgeting practices, enable programs to make good decisions on behalf of their service population.

The next item and the last item on the outer wheel I want to talk about is being results focused. So examples of being results focused include things like being oriented to achievement, measurement of systems that are immediate and provide meaningful information to make decisions on, immediate action taking. And I want to underscore action taking versus action planning. It's really more about being quick on your feet, being able to move forward with information, and being confident, knowing that you have good information in order to make quick decisions and take immediate actions to correct anything that might be going on.

Regular and frequent feedback about performance results, quick and immediate action taking -- I said before to make quick course corrections, are all important. In the middle, to support those cornerstones on the outer ring, we need a solid background or foundation, and these are the internal systems and structures that provide a good foundation for performance to be realized. Those things are areas such as data and research, tools and work systems, professional development -- and by professional development, I'm talking about skill-raising, skill development for staff, and not just one time but repeated with follow-up and expectations so that staff really have an opportunity to practice and use what's learned. A lot of training happens at one time, and with the research on the retention of training that's provided to staff, it disappears, virtually disappears after a few days and then even gets worse after a few weeks or months.

So training over and over so that staff fully get to understand what it is we're training them on. Another foundational piece to create a solid backbone includes networks of teams and relationships. It's the human aspect of organizations, that work happens through human dialog. It's relationship-based. It's through communication, one-on-one and team communication frequently in all directions, not just one way. And that allows for constant fine-tuning of the work processes and the outcomes, and allows people the freedom and the flexibility to really say what's meaningful to the work and to contribute to the whole. And what I really want us to get is that work is created and completed in dialog. It's these clear structures that provide a really good foundation and guidance for staff to conduct their work.

So things like action plans, meeting structures, meaningful and real time data. All of these -- all of what I'm talking about is really, are the same concepts that are present in the Parent, Family and Community Engagement framework. And the framework lays out these three program foundational areas, which

really are the beginning points: The leadership, continuous program improvement, and professional development -- each of these are essential to building a high-performing organization that promotes your family outcomes.

So, now I'm going to break these three program foundations by using a story of organizational change. And I'm going to talk about my program that I was a director of a long, long, long, long time ago, and I'll be using my program example as sort of our case study, to go through and break down those foundational areas a little bit further, to take you into a little bit more about what I'm talking about today.

So a long, long, long time ago, I worked with American Indian and Alaska Native Head Start Program in southeast Alaska, and it's called Tlingit & Haida Head Start. It was a smaller program, and it lies west from the northern half of the Canadian Province British Columbia. It's -- southeast Alaska is the northern terminus of the Inside Passage, so it's a string of islands, island passages. And so all of our programs were located in islands, and in order for me to go out and manage and supervise these programs, we had to take either a ferry boat or an airplane to fly to them. And so as you can imagine, it was an extremely difficult area to serve. It is the home of the Tlingit & Haida Alaska Native People and Nation, and it's a huge land mass. It's larger -- this part of the service area in Alaska is not the entire state. It's only a portion of it, and it's larger than the state of Maine and almost as large as the state of Indiana. So as you can imagine, it was very, very, very challenging to operate this program.

In my program, as with many, there were high points and low points and bumps and potholes, and at the time I re-entered this program as the director for the second time -- yes, I signed up twice for this program -- I quickly realized that our program was at a low point.

In our little Head Start program, we had had many resignations. The monitoring team had just left and there were many program deficiencies that needed to be taken care of and of course, never enough money. Everybody just seemed so overwhelmed with the work to be done, and the management team was split. So immediately, I had to think about my role as a leader, and really leadership is an art. So making immediate recognition of what's so.

And there's a great book called "Blink," and it's written by Malcolm Gladwell, and he talks about the art of making quick choices, instant, quick "i" decisions, being able to capture what's happening at that very moment, is important for a leader to develop that skill, so that you can quickly recognize when something's going on. In this event, things were so out of place that it wasn't hard to do that. There was a lot to do. Having vision is commonly said as well. Modeling integrity, having an eye on results, being courageous enough to make tough decisions. We had to move staff around. There was constant weeding of people out of the organization.

Having the ability to tap into motivation, giving leadership away, stewardship and partnerships, is all leadership as an art. In order to make quick decisions, we needed to have access to real-time data. At Tlingit & Haida Head Start there was lots of data input, but the systems weren't working well.

The staff were not using the same reporting system. As you can imagine the distance in report writing and sending and getting data from an island in Angoon over the mainland in Juneau was a hardship, so we needed one system, and it was not fully utilized by everybody at the time. So having information that was readily available, systems instructions for data collection, a single tool, quick data analysis, and then using that tool to take immediate action steps is really important, so that we could really follow through and pinpoint those areas that were slacking.

We developed a tool that we've used in interim management as well on the national level, which is called the RAISE tool. It's the Real-time Analysis for Improved Service and Excellence. And CDI has continued to develop the work that I started in Tlingit & Haida Head Start by integrating it with our national program. And basically what it is it's a quick GAP analysis of key indicators, so it tells us when a particular standard is in compliance, whether it's slipping and out of compliance, and that's all through using the data that we obtain through Child Plus or any of those other data management tools, Promise or any of those -- even hand tracking. And it's a necessary in order to track the process of key indicators over time, and for staff to really wrestle with the analysis piece of it, and to create quick action steps so that we have real-time planning and real-time action taking. So real-time continuous improvement happens when you have good systems for data collection and meaning making.

The next area in the Foundation is professional development. At my little Head Start program people had many talents, but they were in the wrong jobs. And so there was a huge reorganization of people to fit with the work that was meaningful to them and that matched their areas of training and interest. As I said before, we weeded out staff continuously over about a two-year period, and we trained and retrained.

The first thing I want to talk about in this area is the investment in creating an organizational language. We really at CDI believe that creating an organizational language is very important so that staff begin communicating the expectations and values of the organization so that we can really move forward. So some of the foundational tools that we use include things like emotional intelligence, situational leadership; we have a management and supervision training, core top [inaudible] that we train all of our managers in and so that we're using the same system. Quick performance feedback is important. And I highlighted knowing when training is not enough, because one of the mistakes we make as leaders is believing and thinking that well, if we just train this person, somehow they're going to turn around and do better. That works for some people but not all, and so it's being courageous to know when training is not enough and that perhaps people are not in the right jobs -- so making sure that the right jobs are filled with the right people is really important.

OK: So lessons learned. In my managing of Head Start programs over the years, I've really learned to count on efficient systems and structures, tools for things like data management, financial information, and not forgetting the human element, either, that we have to be able to invest in people, in making sure that my commitment to those folks who make the work happen is 100% as well. And there is also a lesson learned that organizations are really filled with human beings with passions for their work as well, and so treating the organization as a community is really important. Rebuilding organizations as

communities, the realization that top-down sort of "heroic" leadership does not work. You need everybody as a leader in order to make ends meet in Head Start. There's too little to go around, and so we have to make sure that every person is ready and able to lead as much as possible. Commitment to one another and our work and caring about our place in the world and being inspired by this caring.

I love this quote that I found in a recent -- well, it's not really a recent -- it's an older article in the Harvard Business Review. It's about rebuilding companies as communities, and it's an article by a noted business management professor and author, Harry Mintzberg, and he describes the complete failure of MBA programs to produce leaders focused on anything but short-term gains and untested individual top-down "heroic" leadership styles, which has really been demonstrated in the economic crisis and in the leadership of many of our companies. And he states that "Companies must make themselves into places of engagement, where people are committed to one another and their enterprise, and where working as a community means caring about our work, our colleagues and our place in the world, and in turn being inspired by this caring." So thank you for listening and participating today, and I hope my presentation has left you with some reflections and perhaps some new actions to take. So Christine, I'll go ahead and hand it over to you so that we can get into our questions and answers and the rest of our webinar.

Christine: Yeah, thank you so much, Nila. Before we turn it over to Q&A, I just wanted to say that -- remind everyone that you will be receiving a follow-up e-mail from us that will include an archive of the webinar, along with a list of related resources. In the meantime, here on the screen you'll see some additional resources that are currently available on e-click to help you make important connections in your Parent, Family and Community Engagement work and promote school readiness. So I encourage you to go to e-click after this session and then wait for an e-mail from us with the archive and some additional slides.

So we saw everyone's questions come in and we really appreciate you sending those to us, and we saw that there was also some nice discussion happening in the chat and that a lot of you were answering each other's questions, and that's great. We want to turn some of the questions over to our presenters as well. So I have a general question for all of our presenters, and feel free to jump in as you see fit.

The first question is: My staff is already overwhelmed. How can I integrate the principles of the framework in a manageable way? Who would like to take that?

Judie Jerald: This is Judie. I'll jump in with that one. What I have found, of course, your staff is overwhelmed. You know, we all are, and that isn't going to go away, but what I found is when things are being shared among a larger group, that number one, they know why they're doing it. It makes more sense to them, which makes them want to be involved if they can see the connection from for example, collecting some data and then making some improvement in your program as a result of it. So I think one thing has to do with involving everybody, so everybody knows what's going on. The other thing about that is make it fun, have some celebrations. I talked about community. Have a yearly community celebration, or a celebration for the staff. Make it fun in as many ways as you can.

Nila Rinehart: This is Nila. At CDI we call those kinds of events, get or done sessions where everybody, regardless of what your role is, is focused on the same thing. So for example, if there's an urgent something or other --like right now we're all focusing on making sure that services have been delivered to families, so that follow-ups are completed. Well, this is make it follow-up week, while everybody, including the management team and the administrative assistants are all supporting the team to just get follow-up calls made, contacting the doctors, or whatever it is, the referral agencies, to make sure that the follow-up gets done and then everybody reports in at the end of the day while I made 20 calls or I contacted 50 families or whatever, so that there's this energy that gets built up and teamwork and communication and dialog. I think it is overwhelming if you think that you're the only person who's going to be responsible for this huge outcome, but if you know that a team of 50 people are behind you doing the same calls, it gets more manageable, and you become a piece of a team that's moving forward towards the same goal.

Kiersten Beigel: This is Kiersten Beigel. And I -- you know, I've heard some really wonderfully simple ways that groups of staff in programs have kind of taken ownership over the framework. So a couple of examples. First of all, I've heard stories of parents who have kind of sat together and looked at the outcomes and the framework that talk about parents' perspective, and just made some decisions about what they thought would be most helpful for the program to be thinking about in terms of outcomes; so they kind of took those ideas and worked with them a little bit, and used that as a way to think about measuring progress; so they kind of were involved in the decision-making of that with staff. So that was an example of folks kind of taking it and making it their own. And another example is of a program who took -- basically kind of mapped out all the outcomes on the framework, and thought about the kinds of things they're already doing that are working towards those, and found that a lot of what they do really overlaps and contributes to those different outcomes, and that kind of gave them a good way to begin to think about how they want to understand progress, seeing it kind of all in a table in one place. And that was kind of a simple example. Other folks have sort of built the outcomes into their family partnership process, and tried to explore goal-setting with families in some different areas they may have not considered in the past. Those are just a couple of simple examples that are more sort of outcomes focused.

Christine Patton: Thanks, Kiersten, Nila and Judy for answering that question. Second question, also for the larger group of presenters. We had a lot of people ask about methods and assessments. Someone asked, what is a good resource for assessing family strengths. And this person mentioned that they have a good family partnership agreement, but they want to focus more on the strength-based aspects of families. Any tools or assessments that you all know of?

Kiersten: Well, I think -- this is Kiersten, and I can speak to that, generally. I think where we are is needing to weave that into the way we work with families, so I that I hear in the question this idea, we're really trying to assess the challenges and the needs that families are struggling with, and so sometimes on certain family intake forms you may be seeing kind of things that appear to be more problem-focused, you know you really try and identify needs. And so I know that some programs

have taken to building into their assessments areas where they can talk about the kinds of strengths that help families deal with things when they're overwhelmed, or kind of include questions that are more resilience-focused. I think I saw some of that conversation happening in the chat. There's the tools for family strengths-based assessment, which are on the ECLKC. That's a tool that a lot of programs have used, and some folks find that helpful and to have more of a strengths-based focus. There's the family map, which I saw folks included a link to on the chat, which we can send that on in resources that we pull together after the webinar, and that's kind of a more involved family assessment that is evidence-based; so that's been shown to have an effect, a positive effect on child outcomes as related to the kind of work and supports that are happening with family functioning. So I would say -- and I think, you know, a lot of the dialog in the chat room was really about sort of measurement and family outcomes, and we know that's sort of the hot topic right now, and I think in the next webinar when we talk about continuous improvement we'll probably get more into that data discussion. But I'd just encourage folks to build those strengths based questions into the tools you are using if you feel like they're not serving you well in that way to really stay committed to that, and I appreciate the question.

Christine: Great, thanks, Kiersten. A related question, what systems other than Child Plus are others using for data collection and analysis? Judie, what programs do you use at Save? Judie I think you're on mute.

Judie: Okay, I came off mute. Alright. Can you ask the question again, please?

Christine: Yeah, someone wanted to know what systems other than Child Plus are being used for data collection analysis. Do you use any others at Save the Children?

Judie: Well, you know, for Save the Children's Head Start programs we are using Child Plus, but what I would encourage folks to do is look beyond -- use those formal kinds of data, but also look beyond that. Look to interviews, look to community questionnaires. Child portfolios can give you some wonderful information. Look to focus groups and a variety of other ways of finding information, and as I said, then use it. It's very important. One of the things we do at Save the Children is every data, piece of datum that we collect, is aggregated at the end of every single month and then turned back to the people who created it. So, you know, the health advisory committee has the current data. The home visitors have current data about how many visits they've completed and how it's comparing across the agency. Very important to make sure that you collect things in a variety of ways and that you turn it back to folks quickly and regularly.

Nila: This is Nila, and the tool that I mentioned started in my little Head Start program in Alaska, and what we did was we found that just having the Child Plus data was not enough. We needed to aggregate it and do things more with it, so that we could really use it as a management tool. And so what we decided to do was -- we didn't have a large staff, first of all, so we needed to use something quick and dirty. And so we decided on key indicators that we would watch out of all the gazillion pieces of data that are entered into a software or whatever, child-tracking software -- we decided in each service area -- so in ERSI we chose five of the to indicators let's say, in Family Services the same and in

Education -- and those were the indicators that we watched on a regular basis. And so every month, or however frequently -- in some cases we did it more because we were concerned -- but we would break it down every month, and we were able to analyze it down by the center so that we could start seeing trends. Where we had inactivity, we could start seeing trends between home visitors who were completing their work and not completing their work, or data entry issues, we were able to pick out different pieces. And every single month and in some cases in programs that we were really concerned about, we were able to watch those more carefully and pick out when programs were slipping from meeting performance standards and when they were in the red. And typically those indicators, those few indicators, led to a bigger issue. And so it was our quick way of defining and figuring out what's going lead us, what's going to help us develop our Blink skills -- what do we need to be watching out for in order to have a red alert that something's going on here, and typically it was a staffing issue or a training issue or something like that that was triggering it.

Kiersten: And this is Kiersten. I'd love to just add one general thought. You're predominantly -- and I say you, I mean you, Head Start Programs -- you are all using generally the same systems and I see some of you saying Promise and Child Plus, and there are others, too. And what I would ask you to think about is what are the ways those systems are not supporting what you want to do with families, and think about that. And then, I don't know if you have conversations with your vendors ever or the trainers, or if there is vendor specialists who are the contact in your state or in your area -- but I would encourage you to have conversations with them about what possibilities there may be to do some of the things that you'd like to do. So I know that folks are building different systems and using different tools, and that can be difficult but, you know, I encourage you to think about and talk to your vendors about the capacity the systems may have or what kinds of things they may have in the works for the future with those systems for you to be able to get a little more functionality out of them in terms of thinking about family progress and thinking about family connections to children's learning and development as well.

Christine: Thank you, all for taking the time to answer those questions. We're approaching the hour and 15-minute mark, so we're going to wrap up. I just want to remind all of our attendees that the archive of the webinar will be e-mailed to you soon, and that will be accompanied by a resource list and also, before the end of the day today you will be receiving a survey for you to answer some questions about how you felt about the webinar, and we'd love you to fill that out so we can improve the next one. This is a series, like Kiersten said in the beginning. So we want to thank everyone for joining us today and --

Kiersten: Christine, can I just add one more thing? This is Kiersten. I get so excited when I see all the chat and the questions, and I saw a question around parenting education programs, and I wanted to give people a heads up. If you're not tuned into our Fall-to-Fall family engagement series that we have going on for professional development on Family Engagement and the relationship-based competencies, we're going to be -- this month we'll be putting out and we'll probably -- maybe we should just put it out with this follow-up webinar, Christine a research to practice paper on parent-child relationships -- where we'll be highlighting some evidence-based parenting education programs for you as well as strategies in



that paper. So that'll be out in a couple of weeks, so that'll be a nice resource, and we'll try to sort of add it on in what we send out in the follow-up.

Christine: Great, thanks for that reminder and for inserting that, Kiersten. And thank you, everyone, thank you to our presenters and to all of you for attending. Have a good rest of the day.